

MEMORIAL OF MISS DIX. *Dorothea Lyhn*

JANUARY 11, 1847.

Laid on the table, and 2,000 copies ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER laid before the Senate the following memorial of Miss Dix, on the subject of the Insane.

## MEMORIAL:

*To the Honorable the Senate and  
House of Representatives of the State of Illinois:*

GENTLEMEN: Your serious consideration of the afflicted condition of a numerous and fast increasing class of sufferers in the State of Illinois, is very earnestly solicited. I refer to the Insane; to those from whom the healthful exercise of the intellectual faculties is withdrawn; and who, through these disabilities, are alike incapable of self-government, and self-care. I may be urgent—importunate; but this cause sanctions urgency, and justifies importunity.

Insanity is no longer regarded as the *extinction* of the mind; a disease hopeless and incurable; but proceeding from physical causes, which disable the brain for a time from the correct exercise of those functions through which the mind is represented: And this malady is subject to successful physical treatment, as surely as a fever, or other common bodily disease.

In view of ascertaining the condition and necessities of these miserable fellow-beings, I have the past summer journeyed over no inconsiderable portion of the State, visiting some of the northern, central, and southern districts; and prevented only by severe and protracted illness the last autumn, from a more complete course of inquiry and observation.

Scenes of misery have met my view, which no language, however vividly combined, can adequately describe. In addition to what I have witnessed, distressing circumstances have been communicated through reliable sources, as existing in private families; which yield additional evidence that this appalling malady is making sure advances throughout the country. It is not confined to rank, age, sex, or condition. *All* are liable to its attacks; and *all* are directly concerned to secure means for its cure. This can be done only by the establishment of a hospital adapted expressly to this end. No time should be lost in staying the rising tide of suffering. Incurable cases are annually accumulating; and those of more recent origin, already numerous, plead yet more piteously for timely and merciful succour.

But, gentlemen, I do not come to move your *benevolent* feelings, so much as to present *just claims*. I do not ask of you the performance of *generous acts* from

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yourselves and constituents, but respectfully urge you to fulfil *absolute obligations*: the obligations of man, favored with competence and sound reason, to his fellow-man, rendered helpless and dependent through infirmities to which *all* are exposed, and from which none are too rich to be exempt, or too poor to escape.

Governments, as communities, are bound by common dependences and conventional usages, not less than by moral obligations, to watch over, provide for, and protect certain classes, made dependent through the loss of various senses. Of such are the *blind*, the *deaf* and *dumb*, and most of all, the *insane*. All these require peculiar and various modes of care, differing so widely from the necessities of other classes in our communities, as to cast them absolutely on the charge of the State,—a responsible and sacred trust. Nearly every State in the Union has already established, on permanent foundations, schools for the education of deaf mutes and the blind; and asylums and hospitals for the reception and remedial treatment of the insane, including care of idiots and epileptics; and the wisdom of early providing for these; has long since been proved, not solely on the grounds of humanity, but in practice of a wise political economy.

I beg to urge a few, of many substantial arguments, to sustain and enforce my plea.

Recent cases, except there be positive *organic* disease, are curable under judiciously directed hospital treatment.

Dr. Bell, the eminently distinguished and successful physician and superintendent of the McLean hospital at Somerville, Mass, shows that the records of that institution "justify the declaration that *all cases certainly recent*, recover under fair trial. This is the *general* law; the occasional instances to the contrary, are the *exceptions*."

Dr. Earle, the intelligent physician of the Bloomingdale hospital, N. Y., remarks, in his annual report of 1844, "it is satisfactorily *proved* that, of cases where there is no constitutional weakness of intellect, and where the proper measures are adopted in the *early stages*, no less than eighty in every hundred have been relieved in that institution;" and adds, "there are *few acute diseases* from which so large a per centage of the persons attacked are restored as from insanity."

Dr. Kirkbride, in his reports of the Pennsylvania hospital, continually urges "*early and prompt removal* to suitable hospitals, by which large numbers are restored to health, and to usefulness in society, who otherwise would remain a burthen to themselves and their friends."

Drs. Ray, Stribling, Allen, Brigham, Awl, Butler, Stedman, Trezevant, Parker, and others who conduct the hospitals for the insane in the United States, press the duty and urgency of prompt hospital treatment in every successive report.

Besides responding to the touching claims of human suffering, a second advantage accrues from seasonable care of the insane: I refer to the economy of the measure, whether sustained upon private resources, or drawing upon the revenues of the commonwealth. A few assured examples will suffice for illustration on this point.

Dr. Awl of Ohio, records in 1842,—“that of *twenty-five* old cases, suffered to become incurable, the cost to the State and counties had already been \$50,600; while *twenty-five recent* cases brought under *seasonable* treatment, had cost but \$1,130; that is, *forty-five* dollars *twenty* cents for each individual.

Dr. Woodward, late of the Massachusetts State hospital, reported *twenty-five* old cases to have cost the State alone, \$54,157; while the *whole average* of *recent cases returned*, cost but *fifty-eight* dollars, *forty-five* cents.



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A report of the board of Regents of the hospital at Columbia, S. C. exhibits the following facts: "We have three chronic cases among the pay-patients who have cost their friends above \$11,520. The thirty-nine incurable paupers received within the last five years, are maintained at an annual cost to the districts and asylums of \$6,240. There are now in this hospital, ten paupers, who have already cost \$16,000. The average expense to the districts in recent cases, has not exceeded \$50; and the whole expense not \$80." It is obvious, from a glance at these statistics, that humanity and economy are both largely concerned in the prompt and judicious treatment of the insane in the first stages of the disease.

To those who, in the good Providence of Heaven, have had no experience, for it is only those who would advance the idea that the insane can be taken care of in their own dwellings, I repeat, that recovery is as rare as it is nearly hopeless while the patient remains with his family, exposed to all the exciting causes which have developed the malady. Did my limits permit, I might quote innumerable examples which have fallen under my own observation within five years. It is a fact as well known, as it is almost unexceptionable, that those to whom in health, the patient has been most tenderly attached, become, while under the influence of mental aberration, objects of most vehement dislike, if not hatred. A stranger may tranquilize and control the sufferer, while the tender offices of the most affectionate friends, hasten and aggravate paroxysms of phrenzy. Again, the disturbances created by the insane, destroy all domestic order and business. The example they often unhappily exhibit, produces most pernicious consequences where there are nervous persons, or children. The proprieties of life are disregarded, and the once delicate, refined, and religious, become objects often of the utmost anguish, horror and disgust.

The insane require a peculiar physical and moral treatment, which few, if any families, however abounding in riches, can direct and command. Suitable medical care cannot be had out of hospitals, except on rare occasions. The curative treatment of insanity is a branch of the profession requiring as accurate *distinctive* education and experience, as does the skilful practice of surgery on the one hand, and the intelligent treatment of febrile and other common diseases on the other. Physicians in general practice, are infrequently summoned to prescribe for the insane; and consequently, suppose no adverse influences from the patient's being exposed to excitements at home, his mode of treatment is as likely to aggravate and establish the disease, as to control and cure. Again, of the insane who are regarded as harmless to themselves and others, and wander abroad, who has not witnessed the cruel persecutions by which they are often assailed on the part of thoughtless and idle men and boys? I have some recollection of several cases of fatal termination, severally, to the persecutors and persecuted.

Again, there is a large number of the insane who are extremely dangerous to the community, when at large; many whose destruction and mischievous propensities are so uncontrolled, that most disastrous histories are reported in almost every weekly journal. Suicidal acts are common. The destruction of valuable property by fire is frequently noted. Homicide is recorded, under most horrible circumstances, and no longer attracts special notice, "because it is common." Insanity frequently seems to quench all moral sensibilities, overthrows principle, and lets loose the most terrible passions, unrestrained by those laws which before governed the mind. In Hamburg, Germany, an insane man murdered his wife, to whom he had always been fondly attached, and his five children, in one night. I know of several devoted mothers in New York and Massachusetts, who, while laboring under insanity, have killed their favorite children.



In Ohio, not long since, a young man, well known to have been long laboring under insanity, killed an elderly man, his neighbor; was tried, and acquitted on the absolute evidence shown by numerous witnesses. In Indiana, the past season, several cases of homicide under very distressing circumstances, have occurred within my knowledge. Let an example suffice: A respectable, worthy man, residing toward the western border of the State, had for several months exhibited traits of increasing insanity. One day in August last, he broke into a violent paroxysm, rushed into the kitchen where his wife was employed, and clove her head and face in a ghastly manner. She was thought to be dying when I left the place. In Kentucky the devoted and affectionate father of a family, a respectable farmer, became gradually insane: The affections of the wife prevailed over all prudent considerations: She insisted that he should not be restrained: For some time he was rendered tolerably quiet; but a paroxysm seized him: He attacked his wife, wounded her in the head and throat, and leaving her for dead, seized his youngest and darling child, and butchered it frightfully: Then, at every instant more excited, sought the other children; but they had fled, shrieking, to the neighbors for protection. In this State, I understand that a case of homicide lately occurred: On trial, the murderer was fully proved to be laboring under insanity; and there being in the State neither hospital to receive him, nor law to authorize legal restraint, he was discharged; and a consequence shortly was, the murder of his father.

In 1839, the honorable judges of the quarter sessions, and of the criminal sessions, in Philadelphia, gave publicity to their opinions on this subject in the following terms:—"The want of a hospital for the insane poor, often occasions painful embarrassments to the courts, when the defence in a criminal charge is insanity, fully sustained in proof. Although the jury may certify that their acquittal is on that ground, and thus empower the court to order the prisoner into close custody, *yet that custody can be in no other place than the common prisons; places illy fitted for such a subject of incarceration.*"

Under the administration of General Washington, Drs. Rush and Shippen, of Philadelphia, were called to attend a man who had been convicted of a high offence against the Government; but who had exhibited traits of insanity. After a patient and long examination of the case, he was pronounced insane, and irresponsible for any act or crime. He never recovered, but died in a "mad house," as receptacles for the insane were termed in those days. No insane person can be considered harmless to go at large. Public security and individual safety alike demand that these sufferers, who have our hearts' deepest sympathy, should be secured in, and have the protection of, hospital control.

I recollect an incident stated in a number of the Quarterly Review for 1844, which illustrates this obligation: A young gentleman of fortune, of mild and engaging manners, became insane; but only exhibited the malady in a wayward propensity to sit near, and continually watch, wind-mills. For days he would maintain one place, and go any distance for the strange pleasure of gazing on the movement of the sails. His friends, in the hope of destroying this illusion, conveyed him to a part of the kingdom where there were no wind-mills. He drooped, and finally committed *murder* upon a child, mangling it in a frightful manner, affirming that now he should go to the land of wind-mills. Had this young man, who, for a long time after insanity was manifested, seemed to be harmless, been placed in a hospital, under judicious care, there is little doubt that his health would have been repaired, and his mind restored to the correct exercise of its faculties.

Of late, the plea of insanity is often advanced before the criminal courts in defence of many who commit aggravated offences; and not rarely on substantial evidence. Many persons sincerely believe that most criminals merely simulate insanity to escape the awards of justice.

False pretences may be and have been set up ; but to support these, with the means of correct knowledge possessed in these times by well educated physicians, and intelligent, observing minds in general, is not easy. In fact, insanity is not a malady readily counterfeited; and those who have the cunning and daring to assume it, must be very familiar with the physiology of this disease. If proper measures are adopted to secure enlightened opinions, there is no danger to society that the guilty and conscious offender will escape in this assumed guise.

In well regulated hospitals, the patients become, with few exceptions, tranquil, cheerful, and as comfortable as their condition admits ; while we know that in private dwellings, in poor houses, in jails, or in wandering exposed over the country, they are subjects of restlessness, misrule, wretchedness, protracted paroxysms, and many forms of indescribable suffering.

In hospitals *judiciously directed*, employments are regarded as the most valuable remedial agents. I offer a few illustrations, exhibiting the benefit to the patient, and the advantages to the institutions, from systematic, well chosen labor.

Dr. Earle, of the Bloomingdale Asylum, refers repeatedly in his valuable reports, to the advantage of well-directed employment for the insane, and offers examples illustrative of this opinion, from which I select the following : " During the Spring of 1844, two farmers, each of whom possessed a good farm, were admitted to our Asylum within a week of each other. They were laboring under the most abject form of melancholy, and had both attempted suicide. In less than a month their condition being somewhat improved, they expressed a willingness, and one of them a strong desire, to work out of doors. Being furnished with implements, they daily went out together, and worked upon the farm with as much apparent interest as if it belonged to themselves. Under this course they continued rapidly to improve, and both were discharged recovered, one at the end of six weeks, the other at the expiration of three months from the time respectively of their admission."

" Another man was brought to the Asylum, laboring under a high degree of active mania. His appetite was poor, and his frame emaciated. He was careless in his personal appearance, restless, turbulent, and almost incessantly talking in an incoherent manner, upon the delusions attending upon his disease.— When out of doors, he was constantly wandering to and fro, talking to himself, and digging the earth with his hands, without end or object, and generally having his mouth filled with grass. For some months there was but little change in his condition. At length, having become somewhat less bewildered, his attendant succeeded in inducing him to assist in making beds. Shortly afterwards he was employed with the painters and glaziers upon the green-house ; after this, he went into the carpenter's shop, where he worked regularly for several weeks. Meanwhile, his bodily health improved, his mind gradually returned to its former integrity, and he was discharged cured of his mental disorder."

" These cases are fair examples of the utility of a combination of medical and moral treatment ; for in all of them, medicine was regularly administered, until within a comparatively short period before their departure from the institution. They are presented also as cogent arguments in favor of giving to manual labor that pre-eminence which has already been assigned to it."

Dr. Rockwell, of the Vermont State hospital, writes as follows :

" Due provision has been made for the exercise, amusement and employment of the patients. Connected with the Asylum is a farm of fifty acres, on which the patients are employed in gardening and farming, to such a degree as shall be conducive to their health. Such employments are now admitted to be among the most important and successful means of restoration. We have a carpen-



ter's and also a shoemaker's shop and tools, for the employment of those who have been accustomed to work in them. There is also a printing office, in which we publish a Journal, and have an exchange list of more than two hundred newspapers."

Dr. McFarland, of the New Hampshire hospital, reports to the Legislature concerning the sanative benefits of labor, thus—

"Our farm, we find by an increased experience of its curative advantages, as affording labor for the patients, as well as an economical provision for the wants of our household, to be a most valuable appendage to the Asylum. Its advantages are the more apparent, as we are now beholding, on its ample and far stretching surface, the growing means of providing for our increasing household, and diminishing the burden of their support."

While we believe that the benefits of carefully appointed employments are incalculable, we know that those which are ill-chosen are most mischievous. This position I illustrate by the statement of a case lately related to me by a medical man, of an insane person who had been very highly excited, and who was chained and kept in the cell of a poor-house in New Jersey. After a time, the paroxysm subsided, but the rigid confinement, want of air, and a constrained position, had essentially weakened the muscular fibre. In short, he was pale, emaciated, and feeble, but eager to be let out. The keeper promised this, if he would work; and, eager for enlargement, he readily promised to do so. He was accordingly removed from the cell, and directed to load a team with stone. He went to work with alacrity, but soon was exhausted, and asked to rest.—This was refused, and the command of "work, or back to your cell," proved a sufficient incentive and terror, to urge him to the utmost through the day. One day more in feebleness, and with blistered and lacerated hands, he pursued the unequal task; then his strength altogether failed, and to the cell he was remanded—the master saying to him, he "was lazy and must pay for it." After this, the patient's faculties rapidly gave way, and he who might, with judicious care and prudent direction, have recovered reason and ability for a life of useful labor, is now a confirmed idiot. Employment is highly important and useful for the insane; but it is not less important that this should be assigned with judgment, proportioning the task to the physical strength and mental capacity.

I recollect seeing, during several visits to the hospital at Lexington, Kentucky, the alacrity with which the patients daily hastened, according to their classes, to the field, the garden, the kitchen, the laundry, and the dairy; conducting their several varied labors with cheerfulness and propriety.

At the State hospital in Massachusetts, the patients are employed in farming, gardening, cabinet making, matress and harness making, tailoring, &c. The produce of the farm alone, amounted to upwards of \$3,200. The amusements are various; riding, reading, games, walks, cultivation of flowers in their rooms or on the grounds, dancing, singing, &c. Arrangements for systematic employment are in force in McLean Asylum, the Western Asylum of Virginia, and other Institutions, and the respective officers bear the strongest favorable testimony. Dr. Bell, of the McLean Asylum, speaks of it "as an appliance of moral treatment which has proved superior to all others, as regards a large class of patients."

The benefits of hospital care are inestimable. Thousands of touching cases might be adduced, did the limits of a communication like this permit. I quote but few illustrations:

The physician of the hospital for the insane at Columbia, South Carolina, offers the following cases:

C—— entered the Asylum 10 or 12 years ago, after being confined twenty years in one of the jails of this State. He was very violent, and continued so for some years, but is now uniformly quiet, and quite a useful man.

A ——— was chained for many years to a block, and was so violent when admitted into the Asylum, that she ran every body out of the yard, and had to be subdued by the male keepers. She is now the most useful patient in the house among the females.

L ——— was admitted into the Lunatic Asylum on the 5th of January, 1838. She had for eleven years been confined in a small cabin eight or ten feet square. The only opening for communication with the interior of this hut, was a small hole cut near the door, about as large as a common pane of glass, and the door closed and kept constantly so, by substantial pins which were drove tight into the facing.

Sometime during the year 1829, I entreated the mother of this unfortunate girl to send her to an Asylum, where she might have greater liberty, and enjoy many comforts which could not be extended to her in her present situation. My request was promptly refused on the ground of possible ill treatment, and the poor girl was doomed to solitary confinement nine years longer, from false views of maternal duty.

The solicitude of friends at length overcame the prejudice of the mother, and a day was fixed for the removal of the miserable tenant of this cheerless prison; and for the first time in eleven years, January 2d, 1838, the door of the maniac was opened to the light of day. How revolting the spectacle! too much so for detail. In one corner of the filthy cell, a poor emaciated female, with long and matted hair, was to be seen, endeavoring to conceal herself with a few filthy rags—her face turned to the wall, and every effort made, as if to shrink from the gaze of the spectator. In a few days, the subject of this account was placed in the Asylum. For a while, it seemed improbable that she could long survive, but contrary to our expectation, her recovery was rapid, and in a few weeks she was to be seen in ecstasy, enjoying the blessings which are, in these days of light and benevolence, common in similar institutions.

It is but a few years since the alms house of Boston, Suffolk county, revealed scenes of horror and abomination rarely exhibited, and such as we trust are now, in the mass at least, no where to be found in the United States. These mad-men and mad-women were the most hopeless cases, of long-standing, and their malady was confirmed by the grossest mismanagement.

The citizens at length were roused to the enormity of these abuses; to the monstrous injustice of herding these maniacs in a building filled with cages, behind the bars of which, all loathsome and utterly offensive, they howled, and gibbered, and shrieked, day and night, like wild beasts raving in their dens. They knew neither decency nor quiet, nor uttered any thing but blasphemous imprecations, foul language, and heart-piercing groans. The most sanguine friends of the hospital plan hoped no more for these wretched beings than to procure for them greater decency and comfort; recovery of the mental faculties for these was not expected. The new establishment was opened and organized as a curative hospital. The insane were gradually removed, disencumbered of their chains, and freed from the foul remnants of garments that failed to secure decent covering. They were bathed, clothed, and placed in comfortable apartments, under the management of Dr. Butler, now superintendent of the Retreat at Hartford. In a few months, behold the result! recovering health, order, general quiet, and measured employment! Visit the hospital when you please, at "no set time or season," but at any hour of any day, you will find these patients decently clothed, comfortably lodged, and carefully attended. They exercise in companies or singly: in the spacious halls, they may be seen assembled, reading the papers of the day, or books loaned from the library; some labor in the yard and about the grounds; some busy themselves in the vegetable, and some in the flower garden; some are employed within doors, in the laundry, in the kitchen, in the ironing-room, in the sewing-room. In every part of



the house a portion of the patients find happiness and physical health, by well chosen, well directed employment. Care is had that this does not fatigue, that it is not mistimed; and the visiter sees, amidst this company of busy ones, some of the *incurables* who so long inhabited the cages, and wore away life for years in anguish, encompassed by indescribable horrors. And though, of this once most miserable company, less than one-sixth were restored to the right use of their reasoning faculties, with but few exceptions they are capable of receiving pleasure, of engaging in some sort of employment, and of being taken to the chapel for religious services, where they are orderly and serious. Such, to the insane paupers of Boston, Suffolk county, have been, and continue to be, the benefits of the hospital treatment. Than theirs, no condition could be worse before removal from the old building; now, none can be better for creatures of broken health and impaired faculties, incompetent to guide and govern themselves, but yielding to gentle influences and watchful care.

Of the urgent necessity for a hospital in Illinois, many are sensible who will read these pages; but there is perhaps a larger number to whose minds this claim presents itself under the view of no serious and positive obligation. A little inquiry will satisfy all who doubt, that this is either a great or an increasing evil. Illinois, according to the years since the country was settled, has a full proportion of Insane, Idiotic, and Epileptic patients; not numerous enough merely to make it expedient to establish a hospital appropriate for their care and cure, for their own protection, and the protection of others; but an uncompromising duty, from the voice of whose warnings and admonitions there is no mode of escape or evasion. Here humanity, receiving impulse from woe, selfish motives, claiming relief from anxiety and perplexity which never cease their distractions, and political economy, now more clamorous than ever, combine to hasten your efficient action upon this most solemn question. A few, the timid and superficial readers of their fellow-men, but a few, will plead against appropriations for this work on the unsound reasoning that their constituents will disapprove the measure: but I believe that it cannot be shown that the people at large ever manifest displeasure when their representatives appropriate their money to such objects as these. The citizens of Illinois, as other States, will not be found backward to make even some sacrifices, should these be required, when it is made evident that great sufferings exist within their borders, which they have the ability to mitigate, to control, and to limit.

In the poor-houses and county jails of this State, I have not found, at the periods of my visits, many insane persons; but I have seen many in private dwellings, in "cabins," in "pens," and wandering at large; often, very often bearing the marks of rude assault, and the effects of exposure to storms and frost. In the poor-house at Galena, the master showed me through a small apartment occupied by poor patients ill of fever, of consumption, and others confined merely through accidents, broken limbs, &c. Passing into the adjacent apartment, also small, I perceived a *man-cage* constructed on one side, with strong perpendicular bars, inclosing a space about six feet by three. "There, madam," said the keeper with emotion, "there is the only place I have for keeping the furiously insane, when they are sent to the poor-house—a place not fit for a dog—a place where they become daily worse, and where their cries, vociferations, and blasphemies, with other offences, drive all peace and quiet from the place. The sick have no respite, and the family at large no rest. We want, madam, a hospital in our State, and the people ought to know it. It costs as much again and three-fold as much to keep them here as it would in an asylum, and when we've done our best, they are in a dreadful condition. We got up a subscription in town, and sent our last madman, under charge of keepers, home to his friends in Michigan—he was furiously crazy, and I don't know how they can manage him."



The gentlemen who represent severally the counties of Menard, Mason, Fulton, Maconough, Schuyler, Marquette, Cass, Pike and Morgan, can, I believe, render you such facts respecting the sufferings of the insane in their districts, as will not only sustain my importunity, but carry conviction to the minds of any, if there be any, who may question the necessities of this class. I cannot show you the numbers, by exact numerical computation, which claim your provident care. I am convinced that many cases have been overlooked, but I have seen more than enough to convince me that no appeals in behalf of these can at this time be too earnest. In the southern, as in the central and northern counties, most distressing cases, of persons whose limbs have been frozen, both through exposure while wandering in the country during inclement seasons, and from being shut up in small cells or pens, without clothing or fire to temper the cold in the one, or protection from the pitiless storms, in the other.

There is at this time in Morgan county, a man who has been furiously mad, most of the time, for many years. Since he became insane, he has been supported at large expense by the county. His sister and brother-in-law have charge of him. A county officer writes to me concerning this poor creature, as follows:

"Fanning is in a most wretched condition, being kept more like a wild beast than a human being." I have, together with several citizens of Jacksonville, visited this maniac. Those who are paid by the county for taking charge of him, seemed to me to err through incapacity and entire ignorance how to control him, rather than through wilful neglect and inhumanity. His sister said to me, "he is a sight of trouble, and costs a dreadful deal—but we had rather take care of him, than leave him to strangers, *because we are kinder, and treat him better than they would.*" Now for the *comfort, the situation, the treatment* of this unoffending man, who, before the accident which induced insanity, was characterized, as is testified by those who knew him, for intelligence, industry, and correct habits.

It was an intensely hot day last summer, when I visited Fanning. He was confined in a roofed *pen*, which enclosed an area of about eight feet by eight—probably a few inches over. The interstices between the unhewn logs, freely admitted the scorching rays of the sun then; as they now afford admission to the frequent rains, the driving snow, and the pinching frost. He was without bed and without clothing; his food, of the coarsest kind, was passed through a space between the logs; "no better," said a neighbor, "than the hogs are fed."

Some sort of coarse bed-clothing and garments, at times were supplied, but usually not. His feet had been frozen, and had perished; upon the shapeless stumps, he could, aided by some motion of his shoulders, raise his body partially against the side of the pen. This wretched place was cleansed "once in a week or fortnight," in mild weather; not so in the wet, cold, wintry seasons. I was told that when the pen was opened for this purpose, the help of neighbors was requisite: "We have men called, and they go in and tie him strongly with ropes, and get him out on the ground, and then they clean the place, and him, by throwing over pails of water." Of course no fire is here introduced in the cold winter weather; but a singular expedient has been adopted, as horrible as it is singular: beneath the pen is excavated a pit about six feet deep and six on either side. This dreary, ghastly place is entered through a trap-door; neither light, heat, nor ventilation are there; but there is to be found a pining, desolate, suffering maniac, whose piteous groans, and frantic cries, would move to pity the hardest heart."

Gentlemen, as you read this terrible narrative, and if you choose may visit the miserable subject of it, place yourselves for a few dreadful moments in his situation: realize, if you can, some portion, it needs will be a small part, of his sufferings: consider that these are spread over years gone by, and may drag

through years to come, if no hospital unfolds its portals to receive and give relief for such deep distresses. The Saviour, whose disciples we profess to be, left one simple, infallible rule, as a direction for the acts of man to his fellow-man, viz: "*as ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.*" I have laid before you one case, yet not revealing half its horrors; it varies but very little from many I could adduce; the list of which other persons can extend, both here and abroad.

But one effective remedy for these woes is presented: it can only be found in a well established, skilfully conducted hospital.

Legislators of Illinois, upon your action on this question, rest the peace and happiness, the usefulness and the lives of thousands of your fellow-citizens;—nay, your own immediate interests herein, are indissolubly intertwined. Who shall say that his mountain standeth firm, and that he is securely anchored upon the rock? Who shall say that the familiar friend, the revered parent, the child of his affections, the beloved wife of his bosom, aye, even he himself, may not claim the guardian care now solemnly as urgently solicited for others? Timely provide for maladies which cannot be wholly averted, but whose dire distresses may be mitigated and oftener healed.

Rise not from the grave and often perplexing deliberations, which claim your legislation, till you have added to acts bearing merely on the political condition of your State, this work of preeminent obligation to humanity. Retire not from these Halls, in which honor, integrity and justice should rule, till you have rendered this noble service to your fellow-citizens; a service which shall be commemorated long after you shall have passed from the active stage of this life: a service, the holy recollections of which will assist to smoothe your path through the "dark valley;" and which the Recording Angel shall inscribe in the Book of Life: "For the memory of righteous acts shall never perish, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come!"

Respectfully submitted,

D. L. DIX.

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois, January, 1847.



## APPENDIX.

**TABLE** showing the comparative expense of supporting old and recent cases of insanity, from which we learn the economy of placing patients in institutions in the early periods of disease. From the report of the Massachusetts State Hospital, for 1843.

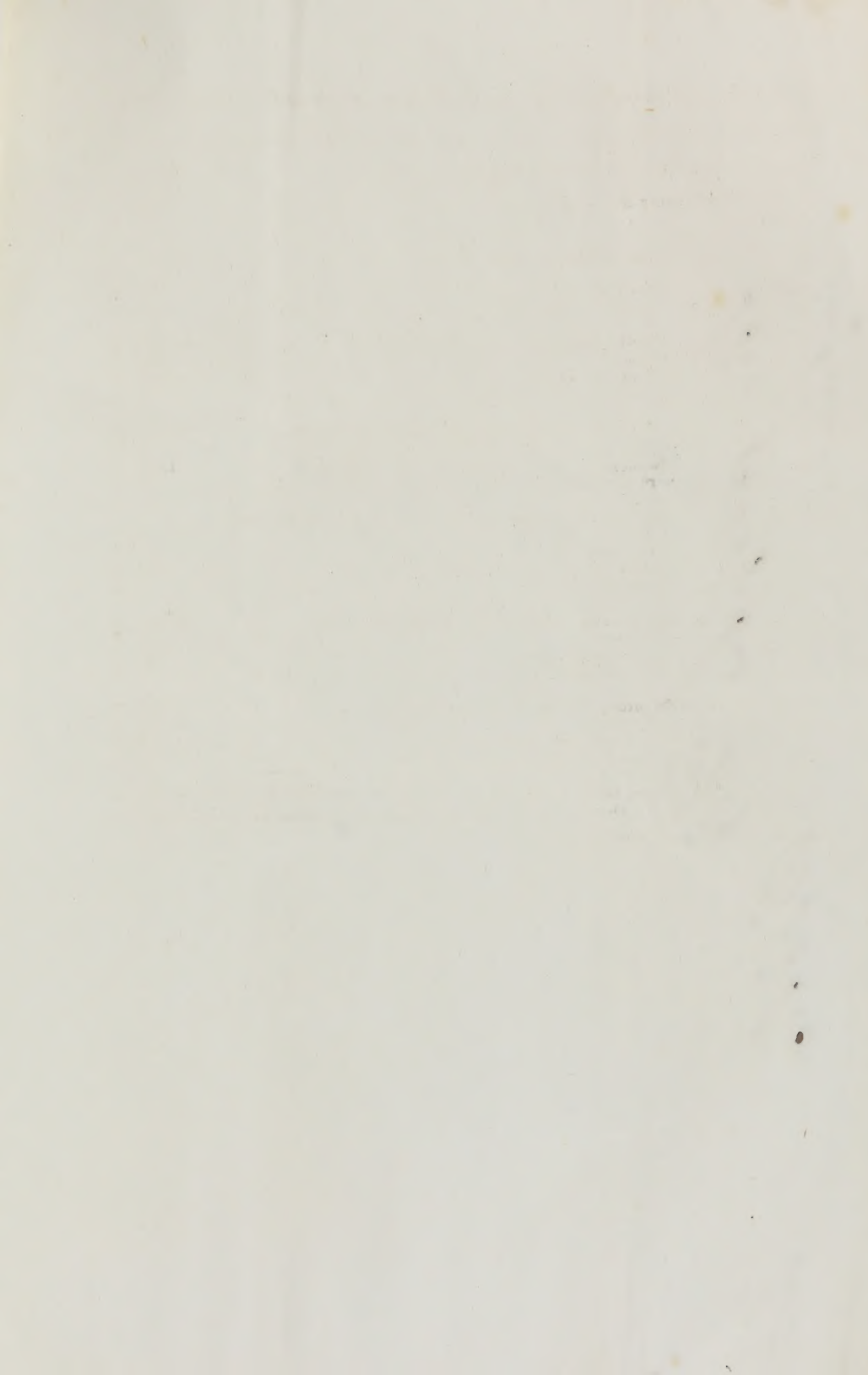
| No. of old cases. | Present age. | Time insane, in years. | Total expense, at \$100 a year, before entering the hospital, and \$132 a year since; last year, \$120. | Number of recent cases discharged. | Present age. | Time insane, in weeks. | Cost of support, at \$2 30 per week. |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2                 | 69           | 28                     | \$3,212 00  | 1,622                              | 30           | 7                      | \$16 10                              |
| 7                 | 48           | 17                     | 2,004 00  | 1,624                              | 34           | 20                     | 46 00                                |
| 8                 | 60           | 21                     | 2,504 00  | 1,625                              | 51           | 32                     | 73 60                                |
| 12                | 47           | 25                     | 2,894 00  | 1,635                              | 23           | 28                     | 64 40                                |
| 18                | 71           | 34                     | 3,794 00  | 1,642                              | 42           | 40                     | 92 00                                |
| 19                | 59           | 18                     | 2,204 00  | 1,643                              | 55           | 14                     | 32 20                                |
| 21                | 39           | 16                     | 1,993 00  | 1,645                              | 63           | 36                     | 82 80                                |
| 27                | 47           | 16                     | 1,994 00  | 1,649                              | 22           | 40                     | 92 00                                |
| 44                | 56           | 26                     | 2,982 00  | 1,650                              | 36           | 28                     | 64 40                                |
| 45                | 60           | 25                     | 2,835 00  | 1,658                              | 36           | 14                     | 32 20                                |
| 102               | 53           | 25                     | 2,833 00  | 1,660                              | 21           | 16                     | 36 80                                |
| 133               | 44           | 13                     | 1,431 00  | 1,661                              | 19           | 27                     | 62 10                                |
| 176               | 55           | 20                     | 2,486 00  | 1,672                              | 40           | 11                     | 25 70                                |
| 209               | 39           | 16                     | 1,964 00  | 1,676                              | 23           | 23                     | 52 90                                |
| 223               | 50           | 20                     | 2,364 00  | 1,688                              | 23           | 11                     | 25 70                                |
| 260               | 47           | 16                     | 2,112 00  | 1,690                              | 23           | 27                     | 62 10                                |
| 278               | 49           | 10                     | 1,424 00  | 1,691                              | 37           | 20                     | 46 00                                |
| 319               | 53           | 10                     | 1,247 00  | 1,699                              | 30           | 28                     | 64 40                                |
| 347               | 58           | 14                     | 1,644 00  | 1,705                              | 24           | 17                     | 39 10                                |
| 367               | 40           | 12                     | 1,444 00  | 1,706                              | 55           | 10                     | 23 00                                |
| 400               | 43           | 14                     | 1,644 00  | 1,709                              | 17           | 10                     | 23 00                                |
| 425               | 48           | 13                     | 2,112 00  | 1,715                              | 19           | 40                     | 92 00                                |
| 431               | 36           | 13                     | 1,412 00  | 1,716                              | 35           | 48                     | 110 40                               |
| 435               | 55           | 15                     | 1,712 00  | 1,728                              | 52           | 55                     | 126 50                               |
| 488               | 37           | 17                     | 1,912 00  | 1,737                              | 30           | 33                     | 75 90                                |
|                   |              | 454                    | \$54,157 00   |                                    |              | 635                    | \$1,461 30                           |

*From Dr. Aul's reports of the Ohio Institution, we extract the following tables:*

|  |   |   |   |             |
|--|---|---|---|-------------|
| In 1841, whole cost of twenty-five old cases,  | - | - | - | \$49,248 00 |
| Average, -   | - | - | - | 1,969 00    |
| Whole cost of twenty-five recent cases,  | - | - | - | 1,330 50    |
| Average, -   | - | - | - | 52 22       |
| In 1842, whole expense of twenty-five old cases,                                     | - | - | - | \$50,611 00 |
| Average, -   | - | - | - | 2,020 00    |
| Whole expense of twenty-five recent cases,   | - | - | - | 1,130 00    |
| Average, -   | - | - | - | 45 00       |
| In this institution, in 1843, twenty old cases had cost,                             | - | - | - | \$44,782 00 |
| Average cost of old cases,   | - | - | - | 2,239 10    |
| Whole expense of twenty recent cases, till recovered,                                | - | - | - | 1,308 30    |
| Average cost of recent cases,  | - | - | - | 65 41       |
| In the Ohio Lunatic Asylum, in 1844, twenty-five old cases had cost,                 | - | - | - | \$35,464 00 |
| Average expense of old cases,  | - | - | - | 1,418 56    |
| Whole expense of twenty-five recent cases,   | - | - | - | 1,608 00    |
| Average expense of recent cases,   | - | - | - | 64 32       |
| In the Massachusetts State Lunatic Asylum, in 1843, twenty-five old cases, had cost, | - | - | - | \$54,157 00 |
| Average expense of old cases,  | - | - | - | 2,166 20    |
| Whole expense of twenty-five recent cases, till recovered,                           | - | - | - | 1,461 30    |
| Average expense of recent cases,   | - | - | - | 58 45       |
| In the Maine Lunatic Hospital, 1842, twelve old cases had cost,                      | - | - | - | \$25,300 00 |
| Average expense of old cases,  | - | - | - | 2,108 33    |
| Whole expense of twelve recent cases,  | - | - | - | 426 00      |
| Average expense of recent cases,   | - | - | - | 35 50       |
| In the Hospital at Staunton, Va. twenty old cases had cost,                          | - | - | - | \$41,633 00 |
| Average expense of old cases,  | - | - | - | 2,081 65    |
| Whole expense of twenty recent cases,  | - | - | - | 1,265 00    |
| Average expense of recent cases,   | - | - | - | 63 25       |

The results of this table are striking, and show conclusively the importance of early admission to the insane hospitals. Other institutions have instituted the same inquiries with similar results.





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